

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 00912 232139Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05

PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSC-01 AID-05 PC-05

OMB-01 /063 W

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O 232101Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7393

INFO USCINCSO

UNCLAS CARACAS 0912

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR VE

SUBJ: NEW CABINET APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED

REF: CARACAS 0834

1. AT NOON ON JANUARY 23 THE MUCH-HERALDED REORGANIZATION OF THE VENEZUELAN CABINET WAS ANNOUNCED. THE NEW MINISTERS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

MINISTER OF INTERIOR RELATIONS - DR. OCTAVIO LEPAGE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN RELATIONS - DR. RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM
MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT - DR. JOSE IGNACIO CASAL
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE - DR. ANTONIO PARRA LEON
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE - DR. CARMELO CONTRERAS
MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS - DR. LEOPOLDO SUCRE FIGARELLA
MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION - DR. GUIDO GROOSCORS
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY - DR. EFRAIN SCHACHT ARISTEGUIETA

2. IN ADDITION, THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS WERE ANNOUNCED:

PRESIDENT OF THE VENEZUELAN INVESTMENT FUND - DR. CONSTANTINO QUERO MORALES

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PAGE 02 CARACA 00912 232139Z

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ZULIA - DR. OMAR BARALT

3. LEPAGE, BORN NOVEMBER 24, 1923, HAS BEEN SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE RULING ACCION DEMOCRATICA PARTY SINCE 1972, HAS BEEN AN AD MILITANT ALL HIS LIFE, AND WAS ELECTED SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MIRANDA IN 1973. ESCOVAR, BORN JULY 23, 1926, WAS MINISTER OF JUSTICE 1964-1966, WAS ELECTED TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES IN 1973 AS AN INDEPENDENT ON THE AD CONGRESSIONAL SLATE (SEE EMBASSY'S LENGTHY BIOGRAPHIC REPORT DATED DECEMBER 23, 1974). CASAL, WHO IS IN HIS 40'S, HAS BEEN SERVING AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT AND IS A FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE VENEZUELAN CHAMBER OF INDUSTRIES AND PRESIDENT OF THE VENEZUELAN SOCIETY OF MINING ENGINEERS. PARRA IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF VENEZUELA IN CARACAS. CONTRERAS, BORN JULY 18, 1935, IS A CALLTLEMAN FROM THE STATE OF ZULIA AND HAS BEEN GOVERNOR OF THAT STATE SINCE MARCH 1974. SUCRE, BORN AUGUST 1, 1926, AN ENGINEER BY PROFESSION, IS AN ACCION DEMOCRATICA POLITICIAN WHO WAS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF BOLIVAR 1960-62, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS UNDER PRESIDENTS BETANCOURT AND LEONI AND LATER POLITICAL SECRETARY OF AD. GROOSCORS, A FORMER EXECUTIVE OF MCCANN-ERICKSON IN VENEZUELA, WAS BORN AUGUST 30, 1925. HE IS A FORMER AMBASSADOR TO COSTA RICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, AND ONCE HEADED THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF INFORMATION.

SINCE MARCH 1974 HE HAS BEEN DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR RELATIONS. SCHACHT HAS BEEN FOREIGN MINISTER SINCE MARCH 1974 AND NOW EXCHANGES JOBS WITH ESCOVAR.

3. QUERO HAS BEEN SERVING AS MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT SINCE JULY 1974. A 46-YEAR OLD ECONOMIST, HE HAS HAD EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS WITHIN THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT. BARALT IS A FORMER PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZULIA AND PRESIDENT OF THE VENEZUELAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION SINCE MARCH 1974.

4. THE NEW MINISTERS ARE TO BE SWORN IN THE AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 23.

5. MORE DETAILED BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON THE NEW CABINET OFFICERS WILL BE SUBMITTED PROMPTLY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, REORGANIZATIONS, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CARACA00912
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750026-0227
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750127/aaaaaxyh.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 CARACAS 0834
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 MAY 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <05 JAN 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW CABINET APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED
TAGS: PFOR, PINR, VE, (LEPAGE, OCTAVIO), (SALOM, RAMON ESCOVAR), (CASAL, JOSE IGNACIO), (LEON, ANTONIO PARRA), (CONTRERAS, CARMELO), (FIGARELLA, LEOPOLDO SUC RE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006